

# ***IOWA OUTDOORS***

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources**  
**[www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)**

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## **BOATERS ENCOURAGED TO WATCH FOR NEW HAZARDS IN RIVERS AND RESERVOIRS**

DES MOINES – Iowa rivers and flood control reservoirs are breathing a sigh of relief after nearly constant rainfall last week left many water bodies at or near flood stage. As the water levels settle back to normal, boaters, canoeists and anglers should use caution as the heavy rain may have moved or shifted downed trees or washed in other debris that could pose a boating hazard.

“Our larger flood control reservoirs are popular for boating, fishing and for personal watercraft. These reservoirs also catch a lot of debris from the upstream flooding and boaters need to be aware of the potential new hazards just below the water surface,” said Susan Hager, boating education coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Rainfall and runoff often reduces water clarity which can hide the new hazards. “We tell boaters to operate as fast as the conditions allow, and the conditions tell me to slow down and watch for tree limbs or other debris deposited in the river or reservoir since the flooding,” Hager said.

The current weekend weather forecast is usually favorable for boaters and combined with the three day weekend should produce heavy boat traffic. Hager said boaters heading out for the holiday weekend should have patience while on the ramp, be courteous on the water, and the boat's operator to avoid alcohol while operating the craft.

“We want boaters to have fun on the water, but we don’t want that fun to end in a boating tragedy. Boaters need to keep safety in mind while on the water,” Hager said. “Remember to have properly fitting life jackets for each person on board, all safety equipment and properly working fire extinguisher on board.”

Life jackets only work when worn, Hager said. “Life jackets float, you don’t,” she said.

The Iowa DNR has boating regulations available wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold, county recorders, DNR offices and online at <http://www.boat-ed.com/ia/handbook/index.htm>

**For more information, contact Hager at 515-281-0122.**

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## **RABBIT, SQUIRREL HUNTING SEASONS OPEN SEPT. 1**

The 2007-08 hunting seasons for cottontail rabbits and fox and gray squirrels opens September 1. The number of cottontail rabbits in Iowa is down about 30 percent from last year and that decline is spread statewide, based on the Iowa Department of Natural Resources annual August Roadside Survey.

“I suspect the dry conditions this summer likely reduced summer reproduction. Research shows dry, hot summers reduces the quality of green vegetation and that can impact female cottontail reproduction,” said Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife research biologist with the DNR.

The best cottontail rabbit numbers are found in southern and eastern Iowa. There are several effective techniques used to hunt rabbits including stomping brush piles, walking slowly through abandoned farmsteads or along brushy fencerows, or wooded draws. The best form of rabbit hunting is done with the companionship of one or more beagles, said Bogenschutz. Beagles and other trailing dogs can increase success and improve the quality of the hunt.

The cottontail season remains open until Feb. 28, 2008, the daily bag limit is 10, and the possession limit is 20. Shooting hours are from sunrise to sunset. Hunters can view the results of the August roadside survey of cottontails in early September on the DNR’s website at <http://www.iowadnr.com/wildlife/files/uproad.html>

Squirrel numbers are more challenging to estimate because the DNR does not survey Iowa’s squirrel population. Squirrel populations typically peak following good mast years and last there was an average mast crop across Iowa, so statewide, squirrel numbers should be similar to last year.

“Even with last year’s average mast crop, hunting opportunities for squirrels are excellent in Iowa because hunting pressure is low,” said Todd Gosselink, Iowa's forest wildlife research biologist. In the early 1960s, Iowa had 150,000 squirrel hunters and a harvest of more than 1 million squirrels. Compared to last fall where 27,746 squirrel hunters harvested 165,225 squirrels in the Hawkeye State.

Although habitat for squirrels has increased in the state over the last 30 years interest in the sport has declined. Gosselink attributes this decline to more opportunity to hunt other species, like turkey and deer, and the decline in Iowa’s rural population.

Squirrel hunting is best done in one of two ways: the sit-and-wait technique and the still-hunting technique.

The sit-and-wait technique is used near likely feeding areas such as beneath oak, walnut, or hickory trees or corn-forest edges. The still-hunting technique is employed by slowly walking through forested areas and stopping frequently to watch for feeding squirrels. The best hunting times usually are during the morning and afternoon feeding hours.

The squirrel season extends through Jan. 31, 2008, the daily bag limit is 6 (fox and gray squirrels combined) and the possession limit is 12. There is no restriction on shooting hours. Fox squirrels can be found anywhere there are a few acres of trees, but gray squirrels are generally limited to the heavily forested areas in eastern and southern Iowa.

**For information on rabbit hunting, contact Bogenschutz at 515-432-2823. For information on squirrel hunting, contact Gosselink at 641-774-2958.**

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## **DON'T BRING OUT OF STATE FIREWOOD TO IOWA PARKS AND FORESTS**

DES MOINES – Iowans by the thousands will be camping and building campfires over the Labor Day Holiday and federal, state and local officials are again urging visitors and campers not to bring out of state firewood into county or state parks and forests.

“Transporting firewood from out of state sources could threaten the health of Iowa ash trees by spreading the dreaded emerald ash borer that lives in ash firewood,” said John Walkowiak, a forester and Land Protection Leader for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Forestry experts in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and most recently, Illinois, are continuing the battle against emerald ash borer, a tiny green beetle native to China. Since

its discovery in 2002, the insect has killed more than 25 million ash trees in the lower peninsula of Michigan, northern Indiana, and northern Ohio alone.

“Within the last two months, emerald ash borer has been found near Peru, Illinois, about 100 miles east of the Quad Cities,” said Walkowiak. “There is a federal quarantine that does not allow hardwood firewood of any type from the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois from coming into Iowa, and officials are taking this federal quarantine very seriously.”

Plenty of firewood is available locally at or near your favorite state or county parks. Campers should contact park staff directly for local firewood sources.

“Buy and burn local firewood and make sure to burn all of the firewood at the campsite and not leave it or transport to a new area” he said.

“To date, continuing joint survey efforts by entomologists and foresters have not found emerald ash borer in Iowa. There is no reason to remove ash trees or to do any type of chemical treatments for a pest that has yet to be found. But, by reducing the movement of out of state firewood to Iowa camping areas we can minimize the risk of accidental introduction of an unwanted pest such as emerald ash borer,” said Walkowiak.

For more information about emerald ash borer go to [www.emeraldashborer.org](http://www.emeraldashborer.org).

**For more information, contact Walkowiak at 515-281-5218, or on cell at 515-249-2944 or email at [john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us)**

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## **WHAT'S HAPPENING TO IOWA'S BUR OAKS?**

By Christine Engelbrecht, ISU Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic and Aron Flickinger, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

For the past few years, we have received many reports of bur oaks in Iowa turning brown and losing leaves starting in July. This year has been the worst year so far for this problem, with extensive browning noticed in many trees.

**Leaves** often turn brown along the veins and in vein-delimited V-shaped areas. Small brown spots are often visible on the leaves. As the leaves turn completely brown, they fall off. The disease tends to affect the entire tree, working from the bottom of the tree up, and it is common to see completely affected trees growing adjacent to completely healthy trees. We have only noticed the symptoms on bur oaks, not white or red oaks. Symptoms tend to first appear in July and progress through the rest of the summer. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the same trees are affected year after year.

The DNR performs annual **aerial flights** to assess the health of trees in Iowa. On August 2 and 3, Aron Flickinger of the DNR flew over the Des Moines River, Cedar River, Iowa River and Mississippi River valleys. Browning of bur oak trees was documented as occurring more often than any other insect or disease problem on trees in Iowa. Muscatine and Van Buren counties had the most trees with this symptom visible from the aerial flights. Ground surveys taken after the flights confirmed that the browning seen in the flights was on bur oaks, with symptoms consistent with our other observations.

The ISU Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic has received numerous samples and reports of this problem, especially from the Spirit Lake area, the Council Bluffs area, and central Iowa. DNR foresters report the disease throughout western and southern Iowa. A similar disease has been reported in the last several years in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

In other states, the disease has been called "Tubakia leaf spot", and we can consistently find the Tubakia fungus on symptomatic leaves. However, there is disagreement as to whether this fungus, usually known to cause a minor leaf spot disease on red oaks, is actually the cause of the problem, and experiments to prove whether the Tubakia fungus can produce these symptoms on bur oak have never been done. We have tested many symptomatic trees for oak wilt, with negative results. Symptomatic leaves have been tested for a disease called bacterial leaf scorch, again with negative results. The fungi that cause anthracnose, a common springtime disease that causes browning, have not been found on these leaves. It is likely that environmental conditions, such as hot dry weather, promote the disease.

Many other factors can also cause browning of oak trees in late summer. Large lace bug populations have caused leaf discoloration on many trees in Iowa recently. Stresses such as drought, soil compaction such as from nearby construction, poor site conditions, injuries to the trunk or roots, etc, may also cause browning and decline of oak trees, even without this leaf disease. The fungal disease oak wilt has been found on bur oaks, and is another factor that can cause browning.

Foresters are concerned about how this leaf disease will affect the health of Iowa's oak trees. If the premature defoliation causes a new flush of leaves to open at the end of July or August, using stored energy reserves that would normally be saved for next spring, these trees will have less stored reserves for next spring's leaves. If the same tree continues to be infected several years in a row and it responds by sending out new leaves each year, the tree can eventually run out of stored reserves and die. Trees that have been observed for the past few years in Des Moines have showed progressive decline and death. However, if the trees do not respond by opening dormant buds, then this leaf disease is just an aesthetic problem having little effect on the overall health of the tree. Luckily, recent weather has provided statewide rains to replenish the dry soil conditions that our trees have been experiencing throughout June and July.

At this time, we do not know for sure how much this disease will affect the overall health of the tree, nor do we know if expensive treatments such as fungicide

sprays or injections would be effective. Minimizing other stresses to the tree can help to maximize its health. You can help minimize stress by watering the tree deeply but infrequently during very dry weather, avoid wounding the trunk or roots, and apply mulch over the rootzone to help moderate soil moisture and temperature levels.

The DNR is establishing permanent plots across the state to see if the same bur oaks are infected each year. Trees will be monitored for new flushes of leaves in July and August, as well as overall health and decline. After several years of data we will know more about how this leaf disease is affecting the health of Iowa's oak trees.

The ISU Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic plans to perform laboratory inoculation experiments to determine whether the symptoms are caused by the *Tubakia* fungus. Testing of samples for oak wilt, bacterial leaf scorch, and other possible causes is ongoing. Iowa State University, the Iowa DNR, and the US Forest Service are continuing to collaborate in monitoring the disease.

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[Electronic photo available]

## **JAPANESE KNOTWEED THREATENS NORTHEAST IOWA LANDSCAPE**

DES MOINES – Natural resource professionals in northeast Iowa are concerned about the spread of a former ornamental plant called Japanese knotweed into stream sides and riparian areas.

“In the last five to eight years, we have been seeing early warning sign of an impending explosion of Japanese knotweed impacting rivers, streams and even roadsides in northeast Iowa wiping out vital native riparian vegetation critical for stream bank stabilization and wildlife habitat,” said John Walkowiak, a forester and Land Protection Leader with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Japanese knotweed, *Polygonum cuspidatum*, is a member of the buckwheat family introduced into North America as an ornamental ground cover and is found in 36 states. It is a vine like plant that grows into large, dense shrubs that can reach 10 feet tall and 50 to 60 feet wide. The stems of Japanese knotweed are smooth, stout and swollen at the joints where the leaf meets the stem. The leaves are normally 6 inches long and 3 to 4 inches wide, being broadly oval to somewhat triangular in shape and pointed tips.

“Right now Japanese knotweed is in flower, and their flowers are branched white sprays,” said Walkowiak.

“Because Japanese knotweed can tolerate adverse conditions ranging from drought to flooding land and roadside vegetation managers are dealing with a very tough

adversary in terms of control”, Walkowiak added. Fast spread and dense thickets it forms are very persistent and control takes several efforts of grubbing, cutting stems and herbicide treatments for control.

“In the last three years I have observed riparian areas along Yellow River, in Allamakee County, and Catfish Creek, in Dubuque County, become heavily infested with Japanese knotweed. With continued mild winters, we believe the spread of knotweed will continue,” said Walkowiak.

Recently, Cooperative Weed Management Areas – or networks of invasive plant and weed specialists are forming in northeast Iowa, the Quad Cities region, the Iowa River Corridor and Central Iowa to begin formal surveys and develop increased actions to deal with invasive plants such as Japanese knotweed.

Walkowiak urges “if you have Japanese knotweed as issues on your lands contact your local county roadside vegetation specialist, county weed commissioner or local DNR foresters or private lands biologists for recommendations.

**For more information, contact John Walkowiak at 515-281-5218, his cell at 515-249-2944 or email at [john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us)**

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## ***IOWA FISHING REPORT***

**For the week of August 28, 2007**

**[www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)**

**Fishing reports will be issued EVERY OTHER WEEK into the fall. For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.**

### **Northwest**

**Spirit Lake** (Dickinson): Fishing is good for 9 to 11 inch yellow perch in 12 to 16 feet of water over the rock piles and weed lines. Most fish are being caught on garden worms. Fishing is good for 7 to 9 inch bluegills along weed lines in 12-16 feet of water using small jigs tipped with garden worms.

**West Okoboji** (Dickinson): Bluegill fishing is good on deep rocks using garden worms in Smith’s Bay, Emerson Bay and the North Bay. A few yellow perch are being caught in the shallow weeds. Crappies are suspended in 25 to 30 feet of water and fishing is fair. Northern pike are good trolling crankbaits. Largemouth bass fishing is good around weed lines using live bait. Muskies are trolling the weed lines.

**East Okoboji** (Dickinson): Yellow bass fishing has slowed; a few fish are being caught near the spillway and on Jingles Point. A few 8 to 10-inch yellow perch are being caught on shallow rocks.

**Little Spirit** (Dickinson): Fishing is good for 9 to 11-inch crappies from shore on the south end of the lake using mini jigs. **Special Note:** Little Spirit has a 15 fish daily bag for crappies.

**Storm Lake** (Buena Vista): Fishing is good for channel catfish drifting with chicken liver or skinned chubs. Several limits have been taken using this method. A few walleyes have been caught, but fishing is slow.

**Black Hawk Lake** (Sac): Channel catfish fishing is good using cut baits, skinned chubs and chicken liver.

**Brushy Creek** (Webster): The lake water level is up but the docks are no longer under water. Some nice bass have been caught around the lakes rocky points.

**Clear Lake** (Cerro Gordo): Yellow bass are hitting live bait or cut bait around rock reefs and the deeper water between the Island and Dodge's Point. Anglers are catching 7 to 8-inch yellow bass along with a few of the larger yellows. Walleye fishing is fair on the rock reefs using a jig and night crawler or trolling crankbaits around the reefs.

**Beeds Lake** (Franklin): Crappie fishing is fair using small crappie jigs trolled along the causeway. Sorting is required for the larger fish.

**Lake Cornelia** (Wright): Channel catfishing is good using chicken liver, stink bait, and dead chubs.

**For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.**

## **Southwest**

**Icaria** (Adams): Anglers are catching channel catfish. Walleyes can be caught from the rock habitat.

**Little River** (Decatur): Fishing for channel catfish is fair using stink bait.

**Wilson** (Taylor): Channel catfish are biting on stink baits or liver.

**Windmill** (Taylor): Anglers are catching channel catfish on liver.

**Green Valley** (Union): Fishing is fair for channel catfish on stink bait or night crawlers in the bays. Largemouth bass can be caught from the stake beds or cedar trees.

**Three Mile** (Union): Bluegills can be caught from the flooded trees in 8 to 12 feet of water. A few walleyes can be caught from the mounds or the old road bed.

**Three Fires** (Taylor): Nice-sized channel catfish can be caught on stink baits. Largemouth bass fishing is good near structure. Bluegills can be caught from the flooded trees or edges of the fish mounds.

**Twelve Mile** (Union): Several walleye and largemouth bass are being caught from the mounds and steep rock shoreline areas. Some nice sized bluegill can be caught from the fish mounds.

**Contact Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.**

**Big Creek** (Polk): Crappies are biting pretty good right now. Most fish are suspended in the main lake. Try drifting the main lake with small jigs 12 to 15 feet down. Largemouth bass are hitting plastics in the mornings and evenings.



**Hickory Grove** (Story): Largemouth bass are biting plastic worms around structure and crankbaits around rocks. Bluegills are biting on jigs and bait fished around brush.

**Saylorville** (Polk): No recent reports.

**Saylorville Dam** (Polk): Fishing has slowed down from the heavy rains. Fishing is still fair for catfish farther down from the outlet. Most anglers are using cut shad or liver. Look for breaks in the current.

**Easter Lake** (Polk): Fishing is pretty slow for walleye and largemouth bass. Catfish are still being caught on stink bait and liver.

**Don Williams** (Boone): Bluegill fishing is fair on small jigs fished around wood. Largemouth bass are biting on crankbaits during the day and plastics fishing around wood.

**Rock Creek** (Jasper): Largemouth bass are being caught in the mornings and evenings on top-water baits. Catfish are still being caught on cut bait and liver. A few crappies and bluegills are being caught on jigs around wood and drifting out in the main lake.

**Contact: Ben Dodd (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes**

**Orient** (Adair): Channel catfish are fair during the day on prepared baits. Bluegills are slow using small jigs and tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass is fair using a slow retrieve and plastic worms in the evenings.

**Nodaway** (Adair): Bluegills and crappies are slow, but a few are being caught around brush piles. Channel catfish are fair using liver in the evenings.

**Greenfield** (Adair): Bluegill fishing is fair with fish being caught around brush piles or drifting jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass are being caught using plastic baits and spinner baits. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using liver.

**Morman Trail** (Adair): Bluegills are slow on south and west side of lake. Channel catfish is fair using liver around jetties and in the shallow bays in the evening. Largemouth bass can be caught on plastic baits.

**Littlefield** (Audubon): Crappie fishing is slow, but a few are being caught drifting a jig and minnow. Bluegills are slow casting a small jig tipped with night crawlers. Channel catfish has been fair in shallow bays and corners of the dam using stink bait.

**Anita** (Cass): Anglers are catching 7 to 8-inch bluegill using jigs from shore and around the jetties. Channel catfish, 2 to 6 pound size, are being caught on night crawlers and blood bait. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair for fish up to 18 inches. Crank baits and jigs have been used around brush piles and rock piles.

**DeSoto Bend** (Harrison): Crappie fishing is slow. Channel catfish is fair using dip baits with a red worm.

**Manawa** (Pottawattamie): Channel catfish is fair drifting cut bait or shrimp.

**Arrowhead** (Pottawattamie): Bluegills are slow using jigs with night crawlers. Fish are 7 to 8 inches. Channel catfish are fair using liver and prepared bait close to shore around jetties.

**Prairie Rose** (Shelby): Fishing is slow for crappies and bluegill drifting jigs tipped with minnows or night crawlers. Channel catfish is slow fishing shallow bays with liver. A few largemouth bass are being caught using crawdad-colored lures.

**Willow** (Harrison): Bluegill fishing is slow with a few fish being caught on jigs tipped with night crawlers. Fishing is fair for 12 to 14-inch largemouth bass on plastic worms and crankbaits.

**Schaben** (Harrison): Bluegills are fair using small jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass are also being caught on night crawlers and plastic baits.

**Middle Raccoon River** (Guthrie): The “No Kill” stretch below Lenon Mills is fair for smallmouth bass using 1/32-ounce jigs tipped with a night crawler.

**Farm Ponds** are good for largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Be sure to ask permission from the landowner first.

**Contact: Bryan Hayes (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.**

**For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

### **Southeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 16 to 20:** With recent heavy rains, many areas of the Mississippi River in Pools 16 to 20 have reached flood stage. The river has crested at Lock and Dam 15 tailwaters at 14.04 feet and is forecasted to slowly start falling by Tuesday. Lower pools are still expected to rise slightly over the next day and begin fall by late Tuesday or Wednesday. River stage at Muscatine is 15.54 feet. River stage at Lock and Dam 17 is 15.54 feet and is expected to crest at 15.8 feet by Tuesday. At Lock and Dam 18, river stage has reached 11 feet and is expected to crest at 11.4 feet on Tuesday. Water temperature has dropped to 74 degrees.

With the high water levels fishing has slowed. Fish are moving out of high current areas to backwater areas and marinas.

Some channel catfish are being caught in Pool 16 by **Credit Island** and in the Muscatine Marina on dip baits.

There are also reports of white bass being caught around Credit Island by the dams in the slack water areas.

Largemouth bass are also being caught in the backwater areas out of the current.

**Lake Darling** (Washington): Last week’s rain has turned the lake turbid, but not too bad. Catfishing is still fairly good either in the late evening or early morning.

**Lake Geode** (Henry): The road at Geode from the beach turn off by the campground all the way to the turn off at the dam on Hwy. J-20 will be closed starting Monday, Aug. 27, and going through Oct. 1 at the earliest and mid-October at the latest. Both boat ramps and the beach area will be closed off during this time. The only access points on the lake will be shore fishing from the dam/spillway areas, shelter 3 and shelter 4 on the south end of the lake.

**Lake Belva Deer** (Keokuk): Bluegill fishing is slow with a few anglers catching some early in the morning before sun up. Catfishing has been fairly good.

**Lake Odessa** (Louisa): Catfishing has been very good by the inlet structure as it is open to let water flow through to keep the water in Odessa in good condition.

**Lake Rathbun** (Appanoose): With the rain on Thursday and Friday, the lake has risen about 10 feet above conservation pool. Areas with water flowing into the lake should have channel catfish on the move and looking for food. Try stink bait or liver.

**Lake Sugema** (Van Buren): Largemouth bass have been hitting on top-water lures in the mornings and evenings. Bluegills have been biting on small jigs in about 8 feet of water. Channel catfish have been biting on stink bait and cut bait.

**Lake Wapello** (Davis): Largemouth bass have been hitting on top-water lures and crankbaits. Channel catfish can be caught using stink bait or night crawlers.

**Lake Keomah** (Mahaska): Largemouth bass have been hitting on spinner baits and rubber worms. Channel catfish can be caught using stink bait or cut bait.

**Hannen Lake** (Benton): Anglers continue to pick up some channel catfish on stink bait and chicken liver, while others are catching some bluegills on small worms. Work the brush piles for best results.

**Diamond Lake** (Poweshiek): Channel catfish are still being caught around the rocky jetties on a variety of smell baits.

**Kent Lake** (Johnson): Fish early and late with stink bait, night crawlers or liver for channel catfish. Some panfish are being taken around the brush on small worms or jigs.

**Skunk River** (Washington): Last week's rains brought the river up to near flood stage, with some low areas flooding. The river is starting to recede slowly and is back into its banks.

**Iowa River** (Louisa): At Wapello, the river is still above flood stage with some minor flooding, and according to the National Weather Service, will maintain that level until sometime Saturday.

**Cedar River** (Louisa): The Cedar will most likely remain above flood stage near Conesville until sometime early Saturday.

**For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.**

## **Northeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15:** Water levels on the Mississippi River are rapidly falling after last week's heavy rainfalls. Water levels on Monday were 10.7 feet at Lansing, 16.2 feet at Lynxville, Wis., 11.9 feet at Guttenberg, 12.56 feet in Dubuque, 12 feet at Bellevue, and 14.53 feet at Camanche. Water temperature is 72 degrees. Although most boat ramps are open, conditions are not entirely conducive to quality fishing. Due to the high water conditions, the water remains turbid and includes a large amount of floating debris from vegetation to woody materials due in part to tributary flooding.

Fishing is very slow with the only fish being reported are species that can readily be taken on bait such as stink baits and night crawlers. These fish include bluegill, freshwater drum and channel catfish. If you have cabin fever from all the rain, try fishing slow eddy current areas away from strong currents.

As the river clears, fishing will pick up. Walleye should be on the wing dams seeking protection from the brunt of the current. For example, if there is a series of four wing dams in a row, the third and fourth wing dams should hold the most walleyes. Crappie and bluegill can be found in the side channel and deeper backwater areas around structure.

**Northeast Iowa Interior Rivers:** Interior rivers in northeast Iowa are high due to considerable rains received over the last two weeks. Water conditions are turbid and beginning to fall in the upper stretches.

**George Wyth and South Prairie Lake (Black Hawk):** Channel catfish are biting on stink baits and dead chubs.

**Brinker Lake (Black Hawk):** Crappies are biting in the early morning and late evening hours. Fish a jig tipped with a twister tail or minnow in 6 to 10 feet of water over structure or close to the bottom.

**Lake Delhi (Delaware):** Channel catfishing is fair to good using chicken liver, stink baits, cut baits or worms fished on the bottom.

**Lake Hendricks (Howard):** Water clarity is improving with the lessening of the recent algae bloom. Channel catfishing is fair, but they can be caught using chicken liver, stink bait, cut bait, or worms fished on the bottom. Try fishing water 3 to 7-feet deep or less as deeper water is holding less oxygen. Fishing is fair for bluegills on wax worms or a piece of night crawler suspended under a bobber. Try using smaller gear when fishing mid-day to hook the finicky ones. There are reports of quality of largemouth bass being caught with a wide variety of artificial lures and live baits. Some anglers are trolling minnows in the deeper water to avoid the vegetation.

**Lake Meyer (Winnebago):** Channel catfish are feeding in 2 to 5 feet of water in the south and west sides of the lake during the day. Use chicken liver under a bobber for best success. In the evenings, fish the east cove of the lake using chicken liver, dead chubs or stink baits. Avoid using night crawlers because the smaller bluegills will usually strip your hook before the catfish can get to it. Smaller crappie can be caught along the weed edges using crappie jigs. Try fishing in 8 to 10 feet of water on the west side next to the weed edge. The larger crappies are being caught by trolling in the deeper water. You will have few strikes, but larger fish using this method. Bluegill fishing is good on night crawlers or angle worms fished under a bobber near the weeds, with sorting of some smaller fish required. Largemouth bass fishing has slowed, but anglers are taking a few on spinner baits.

**Volga Lake (Fayette):** There is an excellent population of channel catfish in this lake, with a good number of them being in the trophy-size range. Try fishing in water that is 7 feet deep or less to avoid low-oxygen conditions. Largemouth bass fishing is good in the early morning and late evening hours. Use slower-moving artificial lures worked along structure. Bluegill fishing is good using wax worms or night crawlers on a very small hook suspended under a bobber.

**Trout Streams:** Trout fishing and stream conditions are mixed. With the recent heavy rains, many trout stockings were suspended due to high and turbid water. Rain and mud also make stream access difficult for the stocking trucks. The pond at the entrance of the Big Spring Hatchery is currently being stocked for anglers to use while the Turkey River is unfishable. The trout stocking hotline is updated as quickly as possible to inform anglers of changes with the stocking schedule. Call the trout stocking hotline at 563-927-5736 before you venture out to see if your favorite stream can be stocked.

**For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.**

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